

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PM

SUBJECT: BUNKER AND LINOWITZ ARRIVAL STATEMENTS

1. FOLLOWING ARE TEXTS OF ARRIVAL STATEMENTS BY AMBASSA-
DORS BUNKER AND LINOWITZ FOR USE AT TOCUMEN AIRPORT
FEBRUARY 13. DELEGATION WILL HAVE ENGLISH AND SPANISH TEXTS
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PRESS.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF BUNKER STATEMENT:
IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN THREE YEARS SINCE MY FIRST TRIP
HERE IN PURSUIT OF A NEW PANAMA CANAL TREATY. IN THE
INTERVENING TIME WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH, BUT MUCH STILL
REMAINS TO BE DONE.

BOTH SIDES HAVE IMPORTANT INTERESTS TO PROTECT IN THIS
NEGOTIATION, BUT BOTH SHARE A COMMON OBJECTIVE: A CANAL
WHICH IS SAFE, EFFICIENT, NEUTRAL AND OPEN ON A NON-DIS-
CRIMINATORY BASIS. INDEED, BOTH NEGOTIATING TEAMS WILL
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WISH TO FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THAT
COMMON INTEREST DURING THIS ROUND.

WE LOOK FOR FRANK DISCUSSION IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
WE HOPE FOR PROGRESS. I WISH TO ISSUE ONE NOTE OF CAUTION,
HOWEVER. THE QUESTIONS BEFORE US ARE NUMEROUS AND COMPLEX.

THEY WILL BE RESOLVED ONLY IF BOTH PARTIES ARE WILLING
AND ABLE TO COMPROMISE.

A SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION REQUIRES THAT EACH SIDE BRING
TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE THE POLITICAL WILL TO CONCLUDE
A TREATY. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT ON THE UNITED STATES SIDE
SUCH POLITICAL WILL EXISTS. EVEN BEFORE FORMALLY
ASSUMING OFFICE, PRESIDENT CARTER STATED THAT IT WAS HIS
INTENTION TO MAKE THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS A PRI-
ORITY FOREIGN POLICY ITEM FOR HIS ADMINISTRATION. BOTH
THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY REAF-
FIRMED THEIR INTENTION TO COMPLETE NEGOTIATIONS AT AN
EARLY DATE.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE A SUSTAINED AND CONTINUOUS
EFFORT TOWARD THAT END. IT IS IN PURSUIT OF THIS
OBJECTIVE THAT MY COLLEAGUES AND I ARE HERE NOW. THERE
WILL BE MUCH HARD BARGAINING IN THIS PROCESS, BUT I
AM CONFIDENT THAT A TREATY ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH COUNTRIES
IS WITHIN REACH.

I ALSO WANT TO PAY TRIBUTE HERE TO THE AMERICANS AND
PANAMANIAN WHO HAVE LABORED TOGETHER LONG AND HARD
TO SUSTAIN THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF AN ENTERPRISE THAT
REMAINS A MARVEL OF THE MODERN WORLD. WE HAVE REPEATEDLY
MADE KNOWN TO THE PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATORS OUR CONCERN
THAT THE JUST INTERESTS OF THE CANAL EMPLOYEES BE SAFE-
GUARDED; WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT PANAMA SHARES THIS CONCERN.
END TEXT.

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3. BEGIN TEXT OF LINOWITZ STATEMENT:

IT HAS BEEN A GREAT HONOR FOR ME TO BE NAMED BY
PRESIDENT CARTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE IMPORTANT DIS-
CUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TOGETHER WITH MY
LONG-TIME FRIEND AND ASSOCIATE ELLSWORTH BUNKER. I
HAVE RECOGNIZED FOR SOME YEARS THE NEED FOR A NEW CANAL
TREATY. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND BUT THAT THE
INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES REQUIRE SUCH AN AGREEMENT.

WHILE SERVING AS THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE OAS,
I BECAME FAMILIAR WITH THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THIS NEGO-
TIATION AND CAME TO APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF A
SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A NEW TREATY NOT ONLY TO THE TWO
NEGOTIATING PARTNERS BUT ALSO TO ALL OF LATIN AMERICA.
I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE UNITED STATES SEEKS TO CONCLUDE
SUCH A TREATY AT AN EARLY DATE. SUCH AN AGREEMENT MUST
ASSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF THE CANAL FOR WORLD COMMERCE
AT ALL TIMES AND IT MUST PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE CANAL.

THESE ARE COMMON INTERESTS OF BOTH PANAMA AND THE U.S.,

AND PROVIDE A BASIS FOR REACHING AN EARLY TREATY ARRANGEMENT, WHICH WILL BALANCE THE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, MEET WITH THE APPROVAL OF OUR PEOPLES, AND RECEIVE RAPID AND FAVORABLE ACTION IN OUR RESPECTIVE RATIFICATION PROCESSES.

I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THESE TALKS AND JOIN WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER IN EXPRESSING MY BELIEF AND HOPE THAT A NEW TREATY WILL SOON BE COMPLETED.

VANCE

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